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A/RES/53/185
2 February 1999

Fifty-third session
Agenda item 94

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/53/609/Add.6)*]

53/185. International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of its resolution 52/200 of 18 December 1997 on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon,[1]

Expressing its deepest concern about the widespread and devastating effects of the El Niño/Southern Oscillation on most of the regions of the world, especially during the period 1997–1998, which scientists have recognized as the period in which the El Niño/Southern Oscillation has had its strongest manifestation on record,

Noting the progress made in the understanding of the El Niño/Southern Oscillation, and noting also that a continued increase in the collection and exchange of data and information could assist in the modelling and prediction of the recurrence of this natural phenomenon,

Noting further that a phenomenon opposite to the El Niño/Southern Oscillation, known as La Niña, can, according to scientific predictions, occur in and affect several regions of the world and that international cooperation could be needed in order to reduce its impact,

[1] A/53/487.

Stressing that any credible strategy for the reduction of the natural disaster effects of future El Niño occurrences must be based on effective dialogue and cooperation between the scientific and technological areas of the United Nations system and its operational responsibilities in the fields of disaster management, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, technical cooperation and capacity-building, including data-collection, monitoring and early warning systems, at all levels,

1. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the report of the Secretary-General,[1] and endorses the recommendations and conclusions contained therein;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* for the cooperation provided by the United Nations system to the countries affected in their efforts to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon and for the valuable cooperation given by the international community;

3. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the outcome of the International Conference on Early Warning Systems for the Reduction of Natural Disasters convened, within the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, at Potsdam, Germany, from 7 to 11 September 1998;

4. *Expresses its satisfaction* at the organization of the first Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts on El Niño, held at Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 9 to 13 November 1998, in accordance with paragraph 10 of its resolution 52/200;

5. *Decides* that the report on the outcome of that Meeting will be considered under appropriate agenda items at the seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, at the substantive session of 1999 of the Economic and Social Council and at the special session of the General Assembly for the in-depth assessment and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;[2]

6. *Also decides* to consider the La Niña phenomenon in the context of the implementation of its resolution 52/200;

7. *Calls* for the continued and full implementation of its resolution 52/200;

8. *Welcomes* the convening, in 1999, of an intergovernmental meeting of experts on the El Niño phenomenon, to be held at Lima, which will have a comprehensive approach, encompassing scientific, technical, social and political issues, and a broad participation of intergovernmental experts and policy decision makers;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to submit recommendations to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1999, on how the United Nations system can deal with natural disaster reduction after the conclusion of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in 1999, taking

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[2] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

into account the lessons learned and making early warning a key element for future natural disaster reduction strategies;

10. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/53/609/Add.6)*]

53/186. International institutional arrangements related to environment and development

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21[1] adopted at its nineteenth special session, in particular part IV thereof, entitled "International institutional arrangements",

Recalling also its decision 52/445 of 18 December 1997 on progress in the implementation of conventions relating to sustainable development,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on ways and means of undertaking the review of progress made in implementing conventions related to sustainable development,[2]

Emphasizing that policy decisions under the conventions are taken by their respective Conferences of the Parties, which are autonomous governing bodies,

Noting that various conventions related to environment and sustainable development are at different stages of implementation, and recognizing the role of the General Assembly in fostering progress in the implementation of those conventions and of the commitments contained therein,

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[1] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

[2] A/53/477.

Reaffirming the need, as stipulated in part IV of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, for greater coherence in various intergovernmental organizations and processes through better policy coordination at the intergovernmental level, as well as for continued and more concerted efforts to enhance collaboration among the secretariats of relevant decision-making bodies,

1. *Encourages* the Conferences of the Parties to, and the permanent secretariats of, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[3] the Convention on Biological Diversity[4] and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa[5] to examine appropriate opportunities and measures to strengthen their complementarities and improve scientific assessments of ecological linkages between the three conventions;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare a report, for submission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, identifying actions undertaken to implement part IV.A, in particular paragraph 119, of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[1] as well as the areas requiring further consideration and work, taking into account the roles of relevant organizations and institutions of the United Nations system, as stated in part IV of the Programme.

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[3] A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

[4] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[5] A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.

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[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/53/609/Add.6)*]

53/187. Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, by which it decided to establish the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Also recalling the results and decisions of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, convened for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21,[1] and, in particular, paragraphs 119 and 122 to 124 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[2]

Further recalling the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme,[3] adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its nineteenth session,

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Resolution S–19/2, annex.

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/52/25), annex, decision 19/1, annex.

Having considered the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its fifth special session,[4]

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its fifth special session and the decisions contained therein;[4]

2. *Recognizes*, in particular, the Governing Council decision on the revitalization, reform and strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme,[5] including the areas of concentration of the activities of the Programme as proposed by the Executive Director in keeping with the spirit of the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme,[3] as well as other priority areas of the Programme, as established by the Governing Council at its nineteenth session;

3. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, at Rotterdam, Netherlands, on 11 September 1998, of the Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and takes note of the fact that the functions of the secretariat of the Convention are jointly performed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme as an interim arrangement pending the final decision to be taken by the parties to the Convention on the location of the secretariat;

4. *Also welcomes* the holding of the first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for an International Legally Binding Instrument for Implementing International Action on Certain Persistent Organic Pollutants, which took place at Montreal, Canada, from 29 June to 3 July 1998, and further welcomes the positive role played by the United Nations Environment Programme in the field of environmental management of chemicals and especially the efforts undertaken by the Programme, as the secretariat of the convention, for the negotiations on a convention on persistent organic pollutants;

5. *Emphasizes* that the United Nations Environment Programme has been and must continue to be the principal United Nations body in the field of environment and that its role is to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment;

6. *Welcomes* the Governing Council decision,[6] as well as the decisions taken by the Assembly of the Global Environment Facility at its meeting held at New Delhi from 1 to 3 April 1998 and by the Global Environment Facility Council at its meeting held in Washington, D.C., from 14 to 16 October 1998, regarding the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in the Facility, and also welcomes the collaboration with the Facility on freshwater resources, as in the global international water assessment, and on activities aimed at combating land degradation as they relate to the focal areas of the Facility;

7. *Encourages* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue with the ongoing reform of the Programme, and recognizes, as stated in the Nairobi Declaration, that, in order to operationalize its mandate, a revitalized Programme needs adequate, stable and predictable

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[4] Ibid., *Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/53/25).

[5] Ibid., annex I, decision SS.V/2.

[6] Ibid., decision SS.V/6.

financial resources, and in this regard also recognizes the interrelationship between excellence, relevance and cost-effectiveness in programme delivery, confidence in the organization and a consequent increase in the ability of the Programme to attract funding;

8. *Also encourages* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to intensify his efforts to mobilize additional financial resources from other donor sources, as appropriate, in order to support the implementation of the priority areas of the Programme in line with the Nairobi Declaration and subject to the agreement of the Governing Council.

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53/188. Implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992, and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21, held in New York from 23 to 28 June 1997,

Reaffirming that Agenda 21[1] is the fundamental programme of action for achieving sustainable development and that the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[2] adopted at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, will enhance the full implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Recognizing that the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 includes a statement of commitment to Agenda 21 and the goals of sustainable development, an assessment of progress made

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Resolution S–19/2, annex.

since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in all main areas of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the Conference, and recommendations on the future methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the programme of work of the Commission for the period 1998–2002,

Recognizing also that mutually supportive efforts at the national and international levels are needed in the pursuit of sustainable development and that the gap between developed and developing countries points to the continuing need for a dynamic and enabling international economic environment supportive of international cooperation, particularly in the fields of finance, technology transfer, debt and trade, if the momentum for global progress towards sustainable development is to be maintained and increased,

Noting with concern that, during the assessment and review of progress made at its nineteenth special session, the General Assembly concluded that although some progress had been made, especially at the local level, the overall trends with respect to the global environment had not improved, and emphasizing that the implementation of Agenda 21 in a comprehensive manner remains vitally important and is now more urgent than ever,

Noting the convening of the first meeting of the Assembly of the Global Environment Facility at New Delhi from 1 to 3 April 1998 and the conclusion of the negotiations on the second replenishment of the Facility,

Noting also that the next review of the implementation of Agenda 21 is scheduled to be carried out by the General Assembly in 2002,

1. *Stresses* the need to accelerate the full implementation of Agenda 21[1] and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21;[2]

2. *Recognizes* that the Commission on Sustainable Development, within its mandate as specified in General Assembly resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992 and in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, will continue to provide the central forum for reviewing progress and for urging further implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and other commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development or as a result of it, for conducting a high-level policy debate aimed at consensus-building on sustainable development and for catalyzing action and long-term commitment on sustainable development at all levels;

3. *Calls upon* the Commission on Sustainable Development to continue to undertake these tasks in complementing and providing interlinkages to the work of other United Nations organs, organizations and bodies active in the field of sustainable development, to play its role in assessing the challenges of globalization as they relate to sustainable development and to perform its functions in coordination with other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and with related organizations and institutions, including making recommendations, within its mandate, to the Council, bearing in mind the interrelated outcomes of recent United Nations conferences;

4. *Emphasizes* that the achievement of more substantive results by the next review of the implementation of Agenda 21 in 2002 will require concerted efforts at all levels, including by Governments, calls upon all countries to fulfil their commitments to Agenda 21, and in this context also calls upon developed countries to fulfil the commitments they have undertaken with respect to financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technology;

5. *Underscores* the importance of the continued active and collaborative involvement of all relevant bodies of the United Nations system in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, and requests the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with all relevant bodies of the United Nations system and taking into account the outcome of the deliberations in the Commission on Sustainable Development, to submit to the General Assembly for its consideration at future sessions, through the Economic and Social Council in view of its coordination function, an analytical report on the measures taken within the United Nations system to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, including identification of constraints and recommendations on how to address those constraints;

6. *Stresses* the importance of high-quality preparations for the forthcoming ten-year review of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for consideration at its fifty-fifth session a report on possible ways and means of ensuring effective preparations for the review;

7. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21".

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[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/53/609/Add.3)*]

53/189. Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 51/183 of 16 December 1996 and 52/202 of 18 December 1997,

Reaffirming the outcome of its nineteenth special session, held from 23 to 28 June 1997, specifically the adoption of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[1] and the relevant resolutions and decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development adopted at its fifth[2] and sixth[3] sessions, held from 7 to 25 April 1997, and on 22 December 1997 and from 20 April to 1 May 1998, respectively,

Noting the importance of the decision taken at its nineteenth special session[4] to convene a two-day special session, in New York in September 1999, for a full and comprehensive review and appraisal of

[1] Resolution S–19/2, annex.

[2] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 9* (E/1997/29).

[3] Ibid., *1998, Supplement No. 9* (E/1998/29).

[4] Resolution S–19/2, annex, para. 71.

the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[5]

Reaffirming its decision to invite States members of the specialized agencies that are not members of the United Nations to participate in the special session and in the preparatory meetings therefor, in the capacity of observers,

Recognizing that small island developing States are vulnerable and face constraints in their efforts to achieve sustainable development,

Noting that implementation of the Programme of Action has been carried out primarily at the national and regional levels, and commending efforts by small island developing States in this regard,

Noting also that the considerable efforts being made at the national and regional levels need to be supplemented by effective financial support from the international community,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General[6] on plans and projects for the sustainable development of small island developing States implemented, under implementation or envisaged for the period 1999–2003 by bilateral donors, United Nations organizations and regional and non-United Nations international organizations, and welcomes the action taken by small island developing States and the international donor community in implementing plans and projects for the sustainable development of small island developing States;

2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General[7] on the development of a vulnerability index for small island developing States, urges that the progress made in the development and compilation of a vulnerability index for small island developing States be continued, and encourages all the relevant organizations engaged in the process of refining the vulnerability index to work collaboratively;

3. *Welcomes* the action taken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, with respect to the donors conference to be held from 24 to 26 February 1999 between representatives of small island developing States and prospective bilateral and multilateral donors, and urges the parties concerned to facilitate project preparation and development;

4. *Encourages* all small island developing States and prospective bilateral and multilateral donors to participate in the donors conference as a means of pursuing the development objectives of small island developing States;

5. *Welcomes* the actions taken by Governments, regional commissions and organizations, organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental

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[5] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[6] A/53/358.

[7] A/53/65–E/1998/5.

organizations in support of activities relating to the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

6. *Urges* small island developing States to continue preparations for the seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the special session of the General Assembly in September 1999 for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and urges the international community, organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental bodies to continue to assist in this regard;

7. *Calls* for the participation of associate members of regional economic commissions in the special session, subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and in the preparatory process thereof, in the same capacity of observer that held for their participation in the 1994 Global Conference;

8. *Stresses* the need for the effective participation of actors of civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, in preparation for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements, taking into account the practice and experience gained at the Global Conference, for their substantive contributions to and active involvement in the preparatory meetings and the special session, and in that context invites the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for their effective involvement in the special session;

9. *Also stresses* the importance of the full and effective participation of small island developing States in the special session and in the seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development as the preparatory body for the special session, invites Governments to make timely and voluntary contributions for that purpose to the Trust Fund for Support of the Work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and in this context requests the Secretary-General to assist small island developing States by applying the modalities for such assistance used for their participation in the Global Conference;

10. *Reiterates* the urgency of international community support of adaptation efforts by small island developing States to cope with the threat of sea-level rise experienced as a consequence of climate change;

11. *Welcomes* the activities undertaken by the Global Environment Facility, and invites it, in accordance with the relevant decisions of its Council and the relevant provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[8] and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[9] to support further the objectives of the Programme of Action;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventh session, through the existing mechanism, and to the General Assembly at its special session for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, a report on the donors conference;

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[8] A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

[9] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

13. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States";

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session a report on actions taken to implement the present resolution and the recommendations emanating from the special session for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

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